



# STUDY REGARDING THE EFFICIENCY OF ACHIEVING THE DEFENSE PHASE IN THE GAMES PLAYED AT THE WORLD FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP - BRAZIL 2014

Gheorghe GRIGORE<sup>1</sup>

Sorin CIOLCA<sup>2</sup>

Tudor PALADE<sup>3</sup>

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## Abstract

*In the context in which some major competitions take place, in our case the World Football Championship - Brazil 2014 Edition, the defense phase (depending on a series of objective/subjective factors existing within the teams that participate in such a final tournament) may decisively contribute to achieving performance.*

*The defensive solutions chosen by taking into account the opponent encountered in different competition phases - either individual or collective ones - have a single objective: the efficiency. Increased efficiency in the defense phase secures, on the one hand, the result, and on the other hand, the qualification in the upper stages of the competition.*

*Thus, the study of efficiency in the defense phase, at the level of teams participating in the World Football Championship, Brazil 2014, through actions aiming to stop the offensive tactical actions of the opponents, will highlight indices which, from one stage to another, can model the training process in top performance football.*

**Keywords:** defense, football, efficiency, performance

**JEL classification:** H51, I26, Y8

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## 1. Introduction

As a major competition, the World Championship represents the main model which inspires the top performance teams on the physical, technical, tactical, psychic and theoretical planes.

The team character of the football game emphasizes the necessity of a collective effort, directed towards reaching the aim pursued: winning the victory (Ciolcă, S., 2008).

The team's victory can be obtained only by optimizing the relations between the two fundamental game phases, the attack and the defense (Cojocaru, V., 2001). It is useless to score one or many goals if the efficiency of your defensive actions is low and one or many goals are also scored by the opponent.

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<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor PhD, UNEFS Bucharest

<sup>2</sup> Associate Professor PhD UNEFS Bucharest

<sup>3</sup> Assistant Lecturer PhD, UNEFS Bucharest, paladetudor@yahoo.com



The fight for taking possession of the ball is, obviously at the highest competitive level, very hard. Regaining possession of the ball and building the attack require the players to have particular qualities, a context in which a team's efficiency in the defense phase represents the basis for achieving the quality and quantity of performance-related exigencies (Grigore, Gh., 2011).

The specialists around those teams participating in the World Football Championship, knowing the importance of the defensive phase, set some efficiency objectives. These objectives, translated by statistical indices, have as a final goal to determine the optimal solving of the game situations.

**The purpose of the paper** was to highlight the quality of the defense phase, resulting from the efficiency of defensive tactical actions undertaken by the teams participating in the games played at the World Football Championship held in Brazil.

**The research hypothesis** from which we started our scientific approach was: obtaining some indices related to the efficiency of the main defensive tactical actions will highlight the performance efficiency of the teams participating in the final tournament of the World Football Championship - Brazil 2014 and will represent the parameters that can model the preparation at the highest level, on a short- and long-term.

**Research methods:** bibliographic study, observation method, recording method, mathematical and statistical method, graphical representation method.

**Content of the research:**

**Research period:** June – July 2014

**Subjects:** National Football Teams participating in the final tournament of the World Football Championship - Brazil 2014

**Type of research:** ascertaining research

**Results:**

**Table 1. Distribution of conceded goals according to the indicators pursued**

Summarizing table					
GC from the goal ar.	GC from the pen. ar.	GC outside the pen. ar.	Own goal	GC from the CC	GC from the SC
41	111	19	5	170	1

**Legend:**

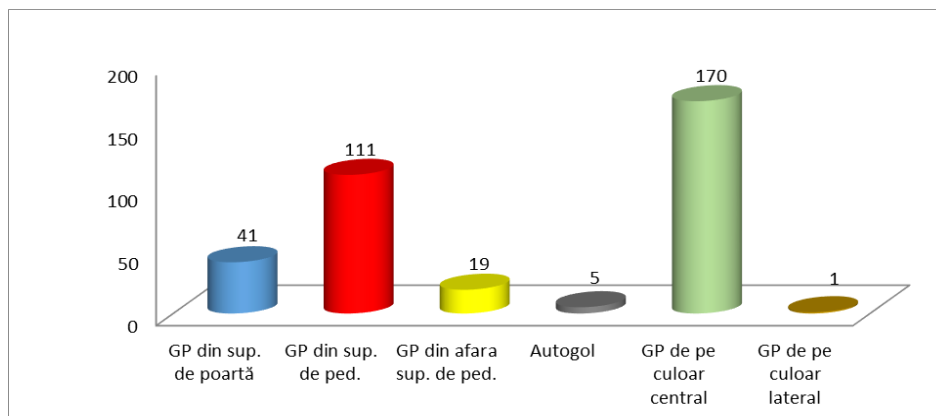
GC – goals conceded

Ar. – area

Pen. – penalty

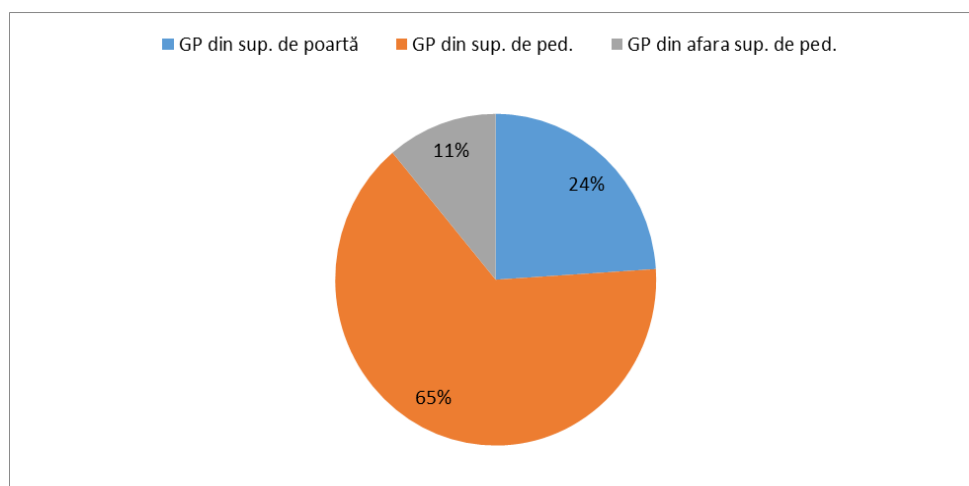
CC – central corridor

SC – side corridor



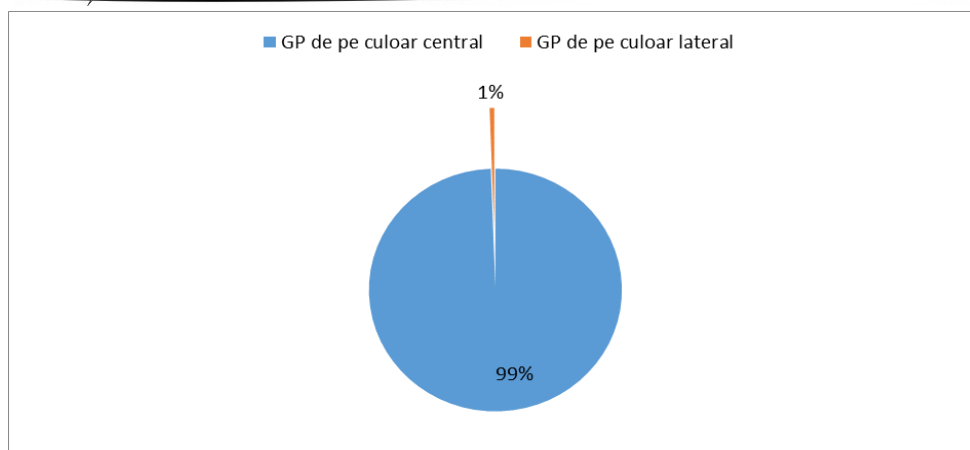
Graph 1

From this graph, it can be noticed the distribution of conceded goals depending on areas (goal area, penalty area, outside the penalty area) and corridors (the central or side one), as well as the number of own goals “succeeded” by the players of the 32 teams participating in the competition.



Graph 2

The analysis of *Graph 2* shows that most of the goals were conceded from the penalty area – 111 conceded goals (65%), followed by the goal area – 41 (24%) and outside the penalty area – 19 (11%).



**Graph 3**

*Graph 3* emphasizes the fact that most of the goals conceded by the teams participating in this World Championship (99%) were scored from the central corridor of the field.

### **Conclusions**

1. the importance of achieving, in the 1<sup>st</sup> defense phase, a pressing as advanced and aggressive as possible, in order to regain possession of the ball as close to the de opposite goal as possible;
2. at this World Championship, we can notice the increase of the role played by midfielders and strikers in the defense phase, through their increased defensive tasks performed in order to permanently support the backs;
3. we can observe the great number of goals conceded from the penalty area on the central corridor of the field, an aspect that will model the preparation, from the defense point of view, in the next important competitions.

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